Force as reported in the "Hindustan Times" dated 30th June, 1993 under the newsitem entitled, "Red-tapism bulldozers IAF Safety steps"; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b) Delay in the procurement of bulldozers was not allowed to affect Flight Safety; as alternative arrangements to control unwieldy growth of vegetation around runways were continuing.

Russian offer of T-80 U Tanks to India

1429. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI IQBAL SINGH:

Will the PRIME MINISTR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Russia has offered its latest tank T-80 U to India;

(b) whether these new tanks besides using normal ammunition also fire rockets;

(c) if so, whether Government have accepted the Russian offer; and

(d) if so, the number of tanks supplied so far to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (d) There is no proposal for the import of any tank from Russsa, including the Russian T-80 U tank. No other information can be divulged in the interest of national security.

Family pension endorsement facility

1430. SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that family pension endorsement facility has been extended to all Defence Service Pensioners;

(b) if so, the details thereof with the number of Defence personnel to be benefited with this move;

(c) whether such facility is available to civilian employees also; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor with the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The endorsement of family pension entitlement is being made on the Pension Payment Order of all Defence personnel including civilians irrespective of their date of retirement since 1988.

Approximately, 2000 Commissioned Officers and 40,000 personnel below Officer rank and 12,000 Defence Civilians are being benefited by this facility every year.

Navy and Coast Guard operation to check smuggling

1431. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have set up a joint Navy and Coast Guard operation in West Coast to check smuggling;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of success achieved so far in the matter of controlling smuggling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Details cannot be divulged at this stage in the interest of operations.

Strengthening the coast guards

1432. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a press newsitem captioned 'Coast Guard not equipped' as reported in the Times of India dated 9-6-93;

(b) if so, whether the Coast Guard is not fully equipped to prevent any oil spill; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and steps taken to make Coast Guard fully equipped to face any oil spill?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. The Coast Guard is equipped to combat medium sized oil spills and have recently contained such spills effectively in the Andaman Sea and Off Bombay High. The strengthening of the Coast Guard is done as per the Coast Guard Development Plans, subject to the availability of funds.

Crash of MI-8 Helicopter

1433. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the outcome of the inquiry conducted into the circumstances leading to the crash of MI-8 helicopter soon after its take off from Ha airbase in Bhutan killing GOC-in-C, Eastern Command, his wife and other army personnel and members of the Airforce crew; and

(b) what action has since been taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) As per findings of the Court of Inquiry, the most probable cause of the accident was loss of power at a critical point after take off, necessitating a forced landing. The reason for loss of power could not be ascertained due to lack of evidence as a result of extensive post impact fire. Loss of power, itself, however would not have resulted in the crash, had it not been for a logging cable, the presence of which was not known to the crew, in the direct path of the decending helicopter.

(b) As the helicopter was fully serviceable before take off, the probable cause for the loss of power could not be established. No extra measures over the already existihg comprehensive checks have therefore been prescribed.

Benefits being provided to ex-servicemen

1434. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the benefits that are being provided to the Ex-Servicemen after their retirement;

(b) what are the schemes that provide for Government/Semi Government, Public Undertaking, Bank|Employment bnefits to Ex-servicemen;

(c) whether Government have drawn any special scheme for the widows and children of Ex-servicemen;

(d) what are the schemes that provide for the benefits for rehabilitation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Ex-Servicemen, after their retirement, are being provided with the following benefits:—

(i) Free medical treatment in military hospitals to pension holders.

(ii) Canteen facilities.

(iii) Preferential admission to medical and engineering colleges as per laid down priorities.

(iv) Entired to short stay in the Sanik Rest Houses during their visit to District Headquarters.

(v) Recognition of marriage of Armed Forces personnel, after their retirement, for grant of family Pensiob.

(vi) Allotment of disposable surplus vehicles.

(vii) Financial assistance to needy ex-Servicemen.